

Message Text

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42

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 /063 W

----- 043963

R 081140Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4486

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 3464

FOLLOWING TEL BOMBAY 0554 DTD 03 MAR 76 RCVD NEW DELHI
BEING REPEATED TO YOU. QUOTE

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT IN

SUBJECT: CONCERN IN RULING PARTY LEADERSHIP IN GOA

1. ALTHOUGH THE OVERALL POLITICAL SITUATION IN GOA HAS BEEN QUITE STEADY SINCE THE ACCESSION OF CHIEF MINISTER KAKODKAR IN 1973, RECENTLY THERE HAVE BEEN SOME SIGNS OF NERVOUSNESS IN THE RULING MAHARASHTRAWADI GOMANTAK PARTY (MGP) ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE. EVEN THOUGH THE MGP HOLDS 20 OF 30 SEATS IN THE GOAN LEGISLATURE AND MRS KAKODKAR, UNLIKE HER FATHER THE FORMER CHIEF MINISTER, HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN WINNING OVER SEGMENTS OF THE LARGE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, THERE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN SIGNS THAT SHE IS WORRIED ABOUT THE CENTER'S POSSIBLE INTERVENTION IN GOAN POLITICS.

2. ON FEB 19TH CHIEF MINISTER KAKODKAR RETURNED FROM A FOUR-DAY VISIT TO NEW DELHI AND TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE GOI HAS NO INTENTION OF BANNING REGIONAL PARTIES SUCH AS THE MGP. HOWEVER, ONLY FIVE DAYS LATER ON THE 24TH, MRS KAKODKAR'S CONFIDENCE SHOWED SIGNS OF WAVERING AS THE PRESS REPORTED HER WARNING TO MGP

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PARTY RALLY THAT NO ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO ATTEMPT THE TOPPLING OF

THE MGP GOVERNMENT, SINCE IT HAS BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MRS GANDHI'S 20-POINT PROGRAM. MRS KAKODKAR WENT ON TO ASSURE PARTY WORKERS THAT IF HER GOVERNMENT WERE BROUGHT DOWN SHE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE MASS APPEAL OF THE MGP WOULD ENABLE THEM TO REGAIN POWER. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS SOME WORKERS AT THE MEETING POINTED OUT THAT "OTHER NON-CONGRESS GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN OUSTED FROM OFFICE" AND MRS KAKODKAR RESPONDED THAT SHE HOPED GOA WOULD BE AN "EXCEPTION."

3. ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE ONLY ONE SEAT IN THE LEGISLATURE AND AN ALMOST NON-EXISTENT STATE ORGANIZATION, GOAN CONGRESS (R) LEADERS ARE PUBLICLY CALLING FOR THE IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE IN GOA. IN A CABLE SENT TO THE GOI ON JAN 31, THE GOA CONGRESS (R) PCC PRESIDENT STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 20-POINT PROGRAM IN GOA STATING THAT "THE CONSEQUENCES ARE DISASTROUS FOR THE COMMON MAN". THE SAME MESSAGE REQUESTED THE IMMEDIATE IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE (REF BOMBAY 369). MR P.KAKODKAR, M.P. OF CONGRESS (R) FROM GOA HAS ALSO BEEN EXTREMELY VOCAL IN NEW DELHI IN DEMANDING THE IMPOSITION OF CENTRAL RULE. CONGRESS(R) WORKERS IN GOA ATTEMPTING TO MOBILIZE PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS DEMANDING THE REMOVAL OF THE MGP GOVERNMENT HAVE THUS FAR HAD LITTLE SUCCESS.

4. COMMENT: MRS KAKODKAR'S CONCERN ABOUT CENTRAL RULE HAVE UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN HEIGHTENED BY THE RECENT REMOVAL OF THE DMK IN TAMIL NADU AND CONGRESS(R) ATTEMPTS TO BRING DOWN THE JANATA FRONT IN GUJARAT. IN TAMIL NADU DELHI'S MOVE AGAINST ANOTHER MAJORITY GOVERNMENT WAS ALSO PRECEDED BY DEMANDS BY MINORITY CONGRESS(R) LEADERS FOR CENTRAL RULE. IN LIGHT OF THESE EXAMPLES CONGRESS(R) LEADERS IN GOA SEEM TO CLEARLY FEEL IN A STRONGER POSITION TO CRITICIZE THE MGP IN GOA DESPITE THE GREAT WEAKNESS OF THEIR ORGANIZATION THERE, THE REAL STRENGTH OF THE MGP GOVERNMENT, AND GOA'S POLITICAL INSIGNIFICANCE TO THE CENTER RELATIVE TO TAMIL NADU AND GUJARAT. MRS KAKODKAR'S CONCERN IN GOA MAY SYMBOLIZE THE MOVEMENT OF THE COUNTRY, UNDER THE STRONG INFLUENCE OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS(R), TOWARD GREATER NATIONAL, POLITICAL HOMOGENEITY AND THE PITFALL BESETTING ALL REGIONALLY BASED PARTIES IN INDIA.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY LEADERS, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NEWDE03464
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760087-0746
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760384/aaaacwkj.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUL 2004 by coburnhl>; APPROVED <05 OCT 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONCERN IN RULING PARTY LEADERSHIP IN GOA
TAGS: PINT, IN, MGP, (KAKODKAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006